GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:105
ANSWERED ON:08.12.2004
NUTRITIONAL ANAEMIA
Jagannath Dr. M.;Yerrannaidu Shri Kinjarapu

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 3 out of 4 children under 3 years of age suffer from nutritional anaemia; and

(b) if so, the reasons for no budgetary commitments for implementing the National Nutrition Policy?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS)

(a)&(b): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 105 FOR 8TH DECEMBER, 2004

(a) The Registrar General of India is responsible for carrying out the census. No such data is available in the census.

The second National Family Health Survey carried out in the year 1998-99, provides information on fertility, mortality, family planning and important aspects of nutrition, health and health care. The International Institute for Population Sciences coordinated the survey, which collected information from a nationally representative sample of more than 90,000 ever married women age 15 to 49 years.

As per information available, 5.9 % of male children and 4.8 per cent of female children under the age of 3 years suffer from severe anemia. 3.2%, 6.3% and 5.6% of children in the age groups 6 to 11 months, 12 to 13 months and 24 to 35 months respectively suffer from severe anemia. A total of 5.4 % of children under the age of 3 years suffer from severe anemia.

Nutritional anemia is important because nutrition is an issue of survival, health and development for current and succeeding generations. Good nutrition is the material basis for human resources development. Children born underweight have impaired immune function and increases risk of diseases such as diabetes and heart disease in their later life. Malnourished children tend to have low I.Q. and impaired cognitive ability affecting their school performance and productivity in their later life. Therefore, the nutritional health in all age groups represents a national economic asset.

To rectify the situation, the Government has laid out the 10th Five Year Plan goals which are :-

1. Screening of all children for anemia and appropriate treatment of those found anemic.

2. Universal screening of pregnant women for anemia.

3. Reducing prevalence of anemia by 25% and moderate and severe anemia by 50% in children

The existing interventions for children are:

i. Reproductive and Child Health Programme: Iron and Folic Acid is given to all zero to two year old.
ii. Integrated Child Development Services Scheme : Children in the age group 0 to 6 years receive supplementary nutrition.
iii. Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY): This scheme was launched in 2001 for timely introduction of complementary food to children in the age group 6 to 36 months.

For implementation of all these interventions, the National Nutrition Policy was formulated.

(b) The National Nutrition Policy states that nutrition affects development as much as development affects nutrition. Integrating

nutritional concerns in development policies and programmes of the Government was the main thrust of the National Nutrition Policy. It identified a series of actions to be undertaken by various concerned departments/ Ministries of the Government in different spheres like food production, food supply, health and family welfare, education, information, rural development, women and child development, people with special needs and monitoring and surveillance. It was the commitment of the Government for several Ministries/Departments. Various Ministries/Departments have been contributing to the goals of the National Nutrition Policy through their respective programmes. The budgetary support for different programmmes particularly the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme of the Department of Women and Child Development, Reproductive and Child Health Programme of Department of Family Welfare, National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme of Department of Health, Universalization of Primary Education of Department of Elementary Education and Literacy, various poverty alleviation and employment generation programmes has substantially increased over the years.